

### REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action of 25 August 2004. Claims 1-20 are pending in the application, Claims 1-20 have been rejected; and Claims 3-4, 13-17, and 19 have been indicated to contain allowable subject matter.

By this Response and Amendment, Claims 1-2, 4-14, and 18 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer; and Claims 3, 15, and 19 have been amended.

No new matter has been added.

In view of the amendments above and the remarks below, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and further examination.

#### Rejections under 35 USC §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as having insufficient antecedent basis for variously recited limitations.

Claims 1-2, 4-14, and 18 have been cancelled thereby rendering moot their rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph.

By this amendment, Claims 3, 15, and 19 have been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of their base, and respective intervening, Claims. In amending these Claims the language of original Claim 1 has been included therein, except as to changes to address the Examiner's rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. More particularly, Applicant notes that the word "first" with respect to the "plurality of connector slices" has been deleted as suggested by the Examiner. Additionally, the word "vertical" with respect to "alignment" has been deleted, and the language revised to more clearly state that the connector slices are stacked along their major surfaces, and that the holes in each of the stacked connector slices are in alignment such that each through-hole of each connector slice is coaxially aligned with the corresponding through-holes of the other connector slices.

Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to Claims 3, 15, and 19 cure

the defects under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and therefore the rejection of Claims 3, 15-17, and 19-20 have been overcome.

Rejections under 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 1-2, 5-12, 18 and 20, have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Grabbe, et al., (US Patent 4,653,840).

Claims 1-2, 5-12, and 18 have been cancelled, thereby rendering moot their rejections. With respect to Claim 20, Applicant respectfully asserts that this Claim depends from amended Claim 19, which the Examiner had indicated to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the rejections under 35 USC §103(a) have been overcome.

Intention to File Continuation Application

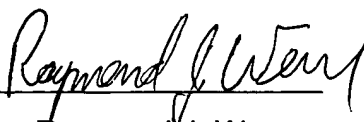
Applicant intends to pursue the patentability of the subject matter disclosed in the specification in a continuation application to be filed during the pendency of the present application.

Conclusion

All of the rejections in the outstanding Office Action of 25 August 2004 have been responded to, and Applicant respectfully submits that the pending Claims 3, 15-17, and 19-20 are now in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

By   
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